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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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****PRESS RELEASE****

Muni connects communities during Lunar New Year and Black History Month

The SFMTA is offering free Muni service, parking and improved connections between neighborhoods.

SAN FRANCISCO – As San Francisco prepares to celebrate Lunar New Year and continues to honor Black History Month, Muni service supports San Francisco’s diverse communities.

Supporting Lunar New Year

The Year of the Dragon begins February 10th, and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is providing a range of support for the celebrations. The first two hours of parking are free at Portsmouth Square Garage every day in February, and Muni will be free on February 24th in honor of the Chinese New Year Parade, thanks to funding from the Board of Supervisors. Bus reroutes and additional train service will begin at 2 p.m. on February 24th, and Community Youth Center of San Francisco will provide ambassadors to assist Muni riders.

Muni Service Equity Strategy

The SFMTA developed the Muni Service Equity Strategy to improve the transit routes most critical to households with low incomes, people of color, seniors and people with disabilities. The strategy focuses on Muni lines serving the Tenderloin/SoMa, Chinatown, Western Addition, Inner Mission, Excelsior/Outer Mission, Oceanview/Ingleside, Bayview, Visitation Valley and Treasure Island.

Compared to all routes systemwide, Muni Equity Routes are consistently prioritized for service increases and restoration. At a systemwide level, Muni Equity routes performed better than non-Muni equity routes, and the percentage of service hours allocated to equity routes has increased since the pandemic, [according to the FY 2023-24 Muni Service Equity Strategy update](#).

Central Subway connects communities

More than 1.2 million people have used the Chinatown-Rose Pak Station since it opened in January 2023 as part of the new Central Subway. The SFMTA partners with Community Youth Center of San Francisco (CYC) to provide ambassador service at Chinatown-Rose Pak Station, helping riders navigate to their destinations and provide tourist information as needed. To celebrate Lunar New Year, CYC has lined up community activities and activations throughout February and March, including a Chinatown Lunar New Year Carnival, the first day of the Lunar New Year celebration, library book giveaway, and community preparedness workshop day.



The 1.7-mile Central Subway has four stations that welcome riders at 4th & Brannan, Yerba Buena/Moscone Station, Union Square/Market Street Station and Chinatown-Rose Pak Station. Each station features public art that depicts the residents, histories, and character of the station neighborhoods. The Central Subway offers riders a direct connection between Chinatown and Visitacion Valley, and between the Bayview and Union Square, expanding access to jobs and opportunities for some of San Francisco's lowest-income residents.

New Bayview Transportation Resource Center

The SFMTA opened the [Transportation Resource Center](#) in San Francisco's Bayview-Hunter's Point District in the summer of 2023. The Center, located at 5009 Third Street, makes information and services for transportation easily available for neighborhood residents, with staff on site to help navigate forms and requirements. The Center, which is run by the SFMTA in partnership with CYC, is a one-stop-shop where people can sign up for Clipper Cards and Muni Transit Passes, access Paratransit services and learn how to use the Muni system, the MuniMobile app and how to access Scootershare and Bikeshare services. It is part of the SFMTA's larger Bayview Community Shuttle Program, which is expected to begin operating in 2024 and will help Bayview-Hunter's Point residents connect with public transit.

As Muni gets better, ridership grows

Muni ridership rose 25% in 2023 compared with 2022, to 433,000 average weekday riders, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) reported in its [latest data](#). The agency's ridership continues to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and ended last year with 71% of pre-pandemic (2019) ridership. Weekday ridership is at 68% of 2019, while weekend ridership is at 86% of 2019. This growth reflects improvements in Muni speed and reliability, and a shift in service planning to focus on connecting neighborhoods.

"Few cities have been more impacted by work-from-home than San Francisco. The loss of downtown commuters severely impacted Muni transit ridership and our finances," said SFMTA Director of Transportation Jeffrey Tumlin. "Yet in many ways, Muni is back and better than ever, with ridership on lines like the 22-Fillmore at 138% of pre-COVID weekend numbers. We've done this by rearranging service to match today's travel patterns, and a relentless focus on making transit: fast frequent reliable clean and safe"

ABOUT SFMTA

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is a department of the City and County of San Francisco responsible for the management of all ground transportation in the city. The SFMTA has oversight over the Municipal Railway (Muni) public transit, as well as bicycling, paratransit, parking, traffic, walking, and taxis. Established by voter mandate in 1999, the SFMTA aggregated multiple San Francisco city agencies, including the Department of Parking and Traffic, Muni, and since 2007, the Taxi Commission.